



AAC Publications

Serratus Mountain, North Buttress

Canada, British Columbia, Coast Mountains, Pacific Ranges, Tantalus Range

IT HAD ALL gone wrong. I sat drinking beer in the Edinburgh evening sun, grumpy and frustrated about my flight to Canada the next day. I'd planned a dream trip to see my best friend and old climbing partner in Vancouver, and then, three weeks before I was due to arrive, she broke her leg. Excited as I was to be heading to Canada, I was gutted to have two weeks with no prospect of climbing.

Yet less than a week later, here I was, halfway up a granite buttress in the Tantalus Range, putting up a new route on Serratus Mountain (2,321m) with my hero—and now friend—Jen Olson. I couldn't believe my luck. Canada West Mountain School had linked me with Jen the day I arrived in Vancouver, and after a few days of climbing together we couldn't resist the challenge of an unclimbed north-facing buttress that led to the east ridge of Serratus Mountain.

On July 31, after an early start, we made our way across the moat and zigzagged up ledges on the lower buttress. We were the only people on the mountain. In fact, we were the only people in the entire range. Having only climbed in Scotland and the European Alps, I've never encountered such solitude or such an expanse of unclimbed rock.

The route continued to entertain us while never going harder than 5.9. The steep rock came to an end after just over 200m, but there was plenty more adventure ahead. After some scrambling we traversed left across the first snowfield on the face, aiming for a ledge system on other side. A bit more scrambling brought us to 500m of 40° snow to gain the east ridge, leading to the east summit of Serratus. Without continuing to the higher north summit, we descended via the glacier on the north face.

Planet 50-50 (700m, PD 5.9) seemed like an apt name for the route—it's a United Nations campaign that focuses on overcoming challenges that stop women from reaching their potential. The fact that I had "no partner, no plan, no nothing" when I arrived in Canada is what opened up the potential to meet Jen and to have one of the memorable experiences of my life.

– Juliet Harris, Scotland

Images



Juliet Harris leading the fifth pitch of Planet 50-50, a new route on the north side of Serratus Mountain.



Juliet Harris following a pitch on Planet 50-50 on the north buttress of Serratus Mountain.



Juliet Harris on Serratus Mountain.



Juliet Harris high on Serratus Mountain.



The line of Planet 50-50 on the north buttress of Serratus Mountain.

Article Details

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| Author | Juliet Harris |
| Publication | AAJ |
| Volume | 61 |
| Issue | 93 |
| Page | 173 |
| Copyright Date | 2019 |
| Article Type | Climbs and expeditions |